

AIR POUCH PRIORITY		LIMITED OFFICIAL USE (Security Classification)		DO NOT TYPE IN THIS SPACE	
FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH		REVIEWED BY <i>[Signature]</i>		DATE <i>6/11/86</i>	
FROM :	Embassy JIODA	RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE	TS AUTH. <i>120.10286a</i>		
TO :	THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE	REASON(S)	DATE <i>July 1, 1959</i>		
REF :	Embassy Despatch	DECLASSIFIED ☐ RELEASEABLE ☒	DATE <i>December 2, 1958</i>		
ACTION		DEPT.			
For Dept.	<i>NEA-4</i>	<i>M/R-2 IRC-8 EUR-5 IO-4 PER-2 AFES INR-1</i>			
Use Only	<i>7/8</i>	<i>CIA-10 OSD-4 USIA-10 ARMY-4 NAVY-5 AIR-4</i>			

SUBJECT: Address to Senior Saudi Officers

On June 27, 1959, I again addressed the senior officers of the Royal Military Academy (Riyadh Staff College) in Riyadh. The subject of my speech, "The Role of the Modern Saudi Armed Forces", emphasized the threat of Communist imperialism to the Middle East. It made the point that while our Government honors the decision of many countries, including Saudi Arabia, to remain neutral in the fight against Communism, we are concerned that these neutral countries be able to withstand the threat of this atheist ideology, and that we are therefore ready to cooperate in improving their economic and military potential, as evidenced by our participation in the training and equipping of the modern Saudi armed forces. Six months ago it would not have been advisable to make an uncompromising anti-Communist speech since there was, particularly in military circles, a considerable belief that the Communists were friends of the Arabs, this remarkable belief being rather supported by Radio Cairo, the fact of arm sales to Arab countries, and subtle Communist propaganda that the USSR was anti-Israel. With Nasser's recent public attacks on Communism and Communist activity in Iraq this belief has considerably subsided. It was noteworthy that the audience listened intently to what I had to say, nor were any questions raised from the floor. Six months ago there would have been questions and probably some objection.

The question period which followed the speech showed that the officers were interested far more in the usual Arab problems than in the very real Communist threat to the Arabs. However, I feel that it was necessary to remind them of this danger and hope that I made them consider it, even if only briefly.

Of the seven questions asked from the floor, four were on various aspects of the Palestine problem, one concerned Algeria, one American policy toward Arab Nationalism, and one the sources of information of military attaches. (The latter question may stem from complaints by the Saudi military attache in Washington that he is not being kept sufficiently informed by the United States Government, a situation brought about by the fact that his Government does not want military attaches in Saudi Arabia, so that, reciprocally, he is not officially accredited as a military attache in Washington.) I do not believe it is by accident that four out of the seven questions concerned Israel, and only one Algeria. The case of Palestine remains the overriding international issue in Saudi Arabia, certainly in military circles.

In answering these questions I emphasized that the Arabs themselves are responsible for educating the people of the world as to the justice of the Arab side of

This Document must be returned to the RM/R Central Files

61-86A/7-159

EM

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

(Classification)

Page 2 of

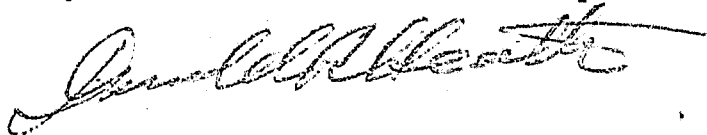
Encl. No.

Desp. No. 1

From AmEmbassy JIDDA

the Palestine issue. The reaction to my replies seemed good, and I noted a friendlier, less suspicious, and less anti-American attitude among the officers than was evident when I last spoke at the College on November 24, 1958. At the conclusion of the question period one of the Saudi officers, apparently spontaneously, came forward to the speakers' platform, thanked me for speaking to the group, and expressed the hope that I would address them again in the future. The evening proved to be a difficult, but effective, and, I believe, a useful exercise.

The translation of the speech and the following question-and-answer session was masterfully and effectively done by PAO Isa K. Sabbagh. During the intermission several officers asked that Mr. Sabbagh be placed on their list of coming speakers. Mr. John M. Lord, Second Secretary of Embassy, collaborated with me in the preparation of the speech.



Donald R. Heath

Enclosures: *OH*

1. Copy of speech.
2. Report on question-and-answer session.

cc:

AmCongen DHAMRAN
General Clark
Mr. Sabbagh

RW.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

UNCLASSIFIED

(Classification)

Page 1 of

Encl. No. 1

Desp. No. 1

From AmEmbassy JIDDA

THE ROLE OF THE MODERN SAUDI ARMED FORCES

Address

Given Before The Senior Officers Institute

June 27, 1959

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

by

Ambassador Donald R. Heath

It is an honor for me to address the superior officers of the Saudi military forces here at the Riyadh Staff College this evening. You are the inheritors of one of the greatest military traditions in world history. There is nothing in history to compare with the one hundred years beginning with the Prophet, which saw the faith and might of Islam spread over Africa and Asia. We Americans are conscious that in Baghdad and in Spain your ancestors set up a civilization that was then superior to that of Europe.

Then came a series of invasions by Mongols, Tartars, and Turks from the north and from Central Asia, which partially submerged, but did not destroy, this glorious Arab civilization which started in what now is Saudi Arabia. Later years saw a few countries of Western Europe dominating the Arab world. There was the Western Imperialism which was in force until recently, but which is now dying, and will soon be dead. Now free and independent Arab governments have appeared which, inspired by and continuing the traditions of Islamic civilization, are at the same time benefiting from the modern industrial techniques. The United States, which never participated in the now moribund Western Imperialism, has been proud to support the independence of these Arab States which are young and old at the same time, and stands ready to aid them now and in the future in developing as you yourselves choose.

You have a great future before you. Modern technology can bring prosperity to the Middle East. As you are probably aware, President Eisenhower has offered to assist the Arab nation in developing it with the bounty which God has bestowed on the American people as a result of their toil.

Yet this shining future is threatened by a menace of which you as Arab military men must be aware. This is a threat to your freedom, your independence, your way of life, and your religion. I mean the threat of Communist Imperialism. You, as Arabs, know that north of the Arab world and separated from you by just a few hundred miles of mountainous land, in the same area from which Turks and Tartars came a thousand years ago, is a Communist power whose policy is the conquest of the world, and its submission to an atheist Communist ideology. This is the new imperialism.

You, as military men, with the responsibility to know what threatens your country, and all Arab countries, know that the Arabs cannot hide behind a line of mountains, any more than France could hide behind her Maginot Line, or China behind her Great Wall. This is particularly true in fighting Communism, which uses paid agents to subvert free countries internally. You know that you must do your part in building strong and prosperous Arab countries which can stand up to the threat of Communist imperialism, as the Arabs in the past have fought imperialism from

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

(Classification)

Page 2 of

Encl. No. 1

Desp. No. 1

From AmEmbassy JIDDA

any source.

The whole world has been threatened with Communist imperialism for fifteen years, as Russia and her conquered satellites stir up crisis after crisis in each part of the world. Today Communism is trying to end the freedom of Berlin. Tomorrow it may be the Middle East. The United States and many other countries in America, Europe, and Asia have chosen to stand up united against Communism now with all our power. We feel that this is our duty. Other states have chosen to remain neutral, and the Government of the United States recognizes and respects their neutrality. It only hopes that these nations will recognize the danger, and make themselves strong enough to withstand the attacks of Communists from within and without. For this reason the United States stands ready to cooperate with all free countries in assisting their development.

The United States is pleased and honored to cooperate with Saudi Arabia, a neutral country. Our two peoples have found friendship and mutual profit in discovering and developing the Kingdom's most important natural resource, oil. We continue to cooperate in the maintenance of Dhahran Airfield. In April 1957 my government gave \$20 million to expand the Port of Dammam and \$5 million to build a new Civil Air Terminal. We also gave a total of \$50 million for arms, military construction and for the training of the Saudi defense forces. Perhaps the cooperation of which we Americans are proudest is the participation in the training and equipping of the Saudi military forces.

We Americans have long heard of the glorious Arab military tradition which began in what is now Saudi Arabia. We read as children of great Arab military feats. We study in our universities about your ancient power and civilization. Now we are privileged to work with you in modernizing the Saudi armed forces. Our mutual goal is the merging of the Saudi Arabian military traditions of honor and bravery with the great power of modern arms. Here the Saudi military can take particular pride, for in just a few years you have learned to use the most modern arms available, and in so doing have shown what Saudi Arabs will be able to do in developing and industrializing their nation. You have the potential to become a strong modern army, and Saudi Arabia a strong modern state. Thus the Saudi Arabian armed forces, which under the late great King Abdul Aziz unified and molded the Saudi Arabian Kingdom, will from now on be well-trained, well-disciplined, well-equipped, and, with officers like you, well-led. I have seen your Saudi Arabian paratroopers, who train with such bravery and diligence in Jidda. I have met you here, studying to maintain the Saudi tradition of fine leadership.

I pray God that neither Saudi Arabia nor the United States be called upon to use their power in bloody battle. Nevertheless each of us must prepare in our own way to defend ourselves. We Americans have seen it as our duty to take a major role in organizing international defense against Communist encroachments. We respect, however, the decision of Saudi Arabia and other Arab states to follow a neutral policy. Moreover, we Americans, as well as the neutral countries, recognize that the new Atomic Age has dread possibilities of destruction. We know, as well as you do, that large scale atomic warfare would contaminate and perhaps destroy the whole globe, neutrals and belligerents alike. We hope that the Communists understand that a direct attack on those Free World countries which

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

(Classification)

Page 3 of

Encl. No. 1

Desp. No. 1

From AmEmbassy JIDDA

have united to defend themselves against Communist encroachment would be an act of suicide for the Communist countries since it would provoke immediate atomic retaliation against them. At the same time we hope that the neutral countries close to the Communist Bloc realize that they are as open to aggression as Tibet was. This threat of Communist attack on the Middle East makes it important that the Arabs be able to defend themselves.

It is not given to us to foresee what tasks lie ahead for the defense forces of Saudi Arabia but we hope and believe that, whatever challenge confronts you, you will acquit yourselves with honor in the future as you have in the past with the guidance, energy and wisdom of His Majesty the King and His Royal Highness, the Crown Prince.

DRHeath/JMLord/ep

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

(Classification)

Page 1 of 2
Encl. No. 2
Desp. No. 1
From AmEmbassy JIDDA

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION
FOLLOWING THE AMBASSADOR'S SPEECH
AT THE RIYADH STAFF COLLEGE
JUNE 27, 1959

Question 1: (Muhammad Ali Salim)

World Zionism has been filling the world with its propaganda against the Arabs in recent years. Regarding this subject, we hope that the Ambassador can give us convincing answers on the following points: 1) Have the American people recognized the falseness of this propaganda? 2) Have the American people begun to understand the Arab case? 3) Would an individual American citizen dare state frankly and openly his opposition to World Zionism?

Answer:

In America we have freedom of speech, and, of course, an American citizen may speak out against Zionism if he chooses, as many do. Furthermore, Americans are beginning to understand the Arab side of the case. You must remember that circumstances have allowed the Zionists to spread their propaganda very effectively in the past. A foremost reason was the world-wide sympathy which was aroused by the German persecution of the Jews in World War II. Then, the Zionists used a great amount of money very cleverly, very effectively. On the other hand, the Arabs are only beginning to be effective in educating world public opinion concerning their side of the case. They have made a good beginning, but much more educational work must be done by the Arabs on this matter.

Question 2: (Abdullah bin Ghazi, executive officer in Dhahran—said to be very pro-American.)

The United States constantly claims to be calling for world peace. Why then, does it support Israel in denying Arab refugees from Palestine their rights? Why did it help Israel to go beyond the boundaries provided by the UN? These policies harm the United States in the Arabs' eyes.

Answer:

Remember that in 1956, at the time of the Suez crisis, when Israel invaded Gaza and Britain and France attacked Suez, it was the United States, under President Eisenhower, which persuaded the Israelis to withdraw from Gaza. President Eisenhower expressed the anger of the American people at this aggression.

The great enemy of the Arab side of the case is the ignorance of the world about them. Education by the Arab states themselves is required. Some progress has been made and the world does understand you better, but only a beginning has been made, in making the world understand the Arab refugee question.

Question 3:

For the past thirteen years the United States has followed a lopsided policy against the Arabs, without change, despite the fact that American interests in the Arab states have increased considerably.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

(Classification)

Page 2 of

Encl. No. 2

Desp. No. 1

From AmEmbassy JIDDA

Lately, though, we have heard of a new trend in American policy more favorable to the Arabs. We hope that His Excellency the Ambassador can explain to us convincingly whether or not there has been such a change.

Answer:

Yes, there has been a change in American policy. We are coming more and more to understand Arab Nationalism. I should say that Arab leaders now realize that we are pretty good friends of the Arabs, and that they are losing the suspicion of the United States which they entertained a few years ago. Remember, though, that we are a democracy, and that no democratic country has the power to go beyond public opinion. There has been an increase in American understanding of Arab Nationalism, but there is still a great deal of educational work to be done. It is being done. I would like to say that nine out of ten Americans understand Arab Nationalism and Arab problems, but that would not be true. Still, I can definitely say that more Americans understand the situation in the Arab Middle East today than did five years ago.

Question 4: The policy of the late Secretary Dulles provided that the United States should help France against Algeria. We know that France helped the United States to gain its freedom from colonialism, but the case of Algeria is different. There the people are fighting against imperialists who have denied their right to independence as guaranteed by the UN charter. What is the present position of the United States on this question?

Answer:

It was never the policy of Secretary Dulles, or U.S. policy at all, to support France in the Algerian case. The United States favors the eventual solution of the Algerian problem as it supported the independence of Morocco, Tunisia, and Indo-China, and as it supports the end of colonialism in all countries. Algeria is a different problem, however. It is the last great Arab land under European rule but it has a non-Arab population of about 18%. We are a friend of the Arabs, but we are also a friend of the French. We cannot step into the middle of this struggle. We can only help reach a settlement from the sidelines. We are not assisting France in Algeria however. If France uses NATO arms we cannot help it.

Question 5: (Sulaiman al-Faraj)

What is your opinion about the Arab refugees? They are living in poverty in their tattered tents. How can a satisfactory solution to the refugee problem be reached? Palestine and its people are of great concern to the Arabs and their governments. The question has been discussed in the United Nations Security Council without results. Can the United States Ambassador enlighten us as to United States policy regarding the Palestine refugees?

Answer:

This is a question close to my heart, and I do not want to appear to be dodging the issue, but I believe that I have already answered that question tonight, and I do not want to take up your time in repeating myself.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

(Classification)

Page 3 of
Encl. No. 2
Desp. No. 1
From AmEmbassy JIDDA

Question 6: (Said Muhammad bin Amr)

Why does the United States help Israel with arms? No doubt the United States shows great concern in helping the Arabs, and we appreciate this help, but could the United States examine the following proposals: 1) Ban arms shipments to Israel; 2) Stop the flood of Jewish immigrants to Israel; and 3) Return the Arab refugees to their homes?

Answer: I have already answered this question in part. As to stopping Jewish immigration to Israel, I wish to point out that the Arab League is planning to meet to discuss this issue, and we hope that it can be solved by the Arab League. There has been progress, but very slow progress, in this direction. In the past year even a number of thoughtful Jews have begun to worry about the injustice of the Arab refugees plight.

Question 7: (Abdullah Faraj)

Are there any dependable sources which military attaches can use in providing information to their governments? If not, how can some system be set up to make this individual information available? What do you think we should do about this, Mr. Ambassador?

Answer: I know of no government which does not provide the necessary information to military attaches stationed in a given country. I think that Colonel Isley can answer this question better than I, since he has just had an assignment as a military attache.

Colonel Isley:

I have found that a military attache can get the information he requires from the foreign office, by visits to military installations, and from the war office. For our Government's part, attaches stationed in the United States are given information as they request it, depending on the classification of that information. Additional sources of information are visits to arsenals and military posts and observation of maneuvers.

Ambassador: I know of no government to which the United States does not provide the information and service which its military attache requires, except perhaps Russia.

JMLord/ab

UNCLASSIFIED